- 3. (Previously Presented) A pellet according to claim 25 wherein the inert, non-alkaline coating and the system of modified release are mixed in a single layer.
- 4. (Previously Presented) A pellet according to claim 25, in which said one or more intermediate layers (c) comprise a mixture of one or more layers of inert, non-alkaline coating, and one or more layers of said system of modified release that comprises an inert, non-alkaline polymer soluble in water and an inert polymer insoluble in water, and one or more layers of a mixture of inert, non-alkaline coating, and said system of modified release that comprises an inert, non-alkaline polymer soluble in water and an inert polymer insoluble in water.
- 5. (Currently Amended A pellet according to claim 25, wherein the inert, non-alkaline coating, formed of an inert, non-alkaline polymer soluble in water and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable inert excipients is disposed over the layer (b), wherein the layer [[(b)]] comprises the system of modified release that comprises an inert, non-alkaline polymer soluble in water and an inert polymer insoluble in water which is disposed over the layer of the inert, non-alkaline coating; and the layer (d) is disposed over the layer formed by the system of modified release comprising an inert non-alkaline polymer soluble in water and an inert polymer insoluble in water.
- 6. (Currently Amended) A pellet according to claim 25 wherein said acid labile benzimidazole compound is a compound of formula (I)

(I)

wherein

R¹ is hydrogen methoxy or difluoromethoxy;

R² is methyl or methoxy;

R3 is methoxy, 2,2,2-trifluoromethoxy 2,2,2-trifluoroethoxy or

3-methoxypropoxy; and

R⁴ is hydrogen or methyl.

- 7. (Previously Presented) A pellet according to claim 25 wherein said acid labile benzimidazole compound is selected from the group consisting of omeprazole, lansoprazole, pantoprazole and mixtures thereof.
- 8. (Previously Presented) A pellet according to claim 25 wherein said inert, non-alkaline polymer soluble in water, present in the layer (b) is selected from hydroxypropylmethylcellulose (HPMC) and hydroxypropylcellulose (HPC).
- 9. (Previously Presented) A pellet according to claim 25, wherein said inert, non-alkaline polymer soluble in water of the inert, non-alkaline coating, present in the intermediate layer(s) (c) is hydroxypropylmethylcellulose (HPMC).
- 10. (Previously Presented) A pellet according to claim 25 wherein said inert, non-alkaline polymer soluble in water of the system of modified release, present in the one or more intermediate layers (c) is hydroxypropylmethylcellulose (HPMC).
- 11. (Previously Presented) A pellet according to claim 25 wherein said inert polymer insoluble in water of the system of modified release, present in the one or more intermediate layers (c) is ethylcellulose or a copolymer of ammonium methacrylate.
- 12. (Previously Presented) A pellet according to claim 25 wherein said external layer (d) comprises a gastro-resistant polymer, a plasticizer and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable inert excipients.

- 13. (Previously Presented) A method for obtaining a gastro-resistant pellet of modified release that contains as an active ingredient an acid labile benzimidazole compound, that comprises:
 - (i) applying an aqueous suspension of an acid labile benzimidazole compound, an inert, non-alkaline polymer soluble in water, and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable inert excipients to cover an inert nucleus;
 - (ii) applying one or more intermediate layers, separated or mixed among themselves that contain (i) an inert, non-alkaline coating, formed of an inert, non-alkaline polymer soluble in water and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable inert excipients; and (ii) a system of modified release that comprises an inert, non-alkaline polymer soluble in water and an inert polymer insoluble in water, a plasticizer and an anti-tack agent, separate or mixed; and
 - (iii) covering said intermediate layer or layers with an aqueous suspension that comprises a gastro-resistant polymer, a plasticizer and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable inert excipients to create an external layer of enteric coating.
- 14. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 13 wherein said acid labile benzimidazole compound is a compound of formula (I)

$$R1$$
 N
 $R2$
 $R3$
 $R4$

(I)

wherein

R¹ is hydrogen, methoxy or difluoromethoxy;

R² is methyl or methoxy;

R³ is methoxy, 2,2,2-trifluoroethoxy or 3-methoxypropoxy; and

R⁴ is hydrogen or methyl.

- 15. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 13 wherein said acid labile benzimidazole compound is selected from the group consisting of omeprazole, lansoprazole, pantoprazole and mixtures thereof.
- 16. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 13, wherein, said inert, non-alkaline polymer soluble in water, present in the suspension applied in step (i) is selected from hydroxypropyl-methylcellulose (HPMC) and hydroxypropylcellulose (HPC).
- 17. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 13, wherein, said inert, non-alkaline polymer soluble in water, comprised in the inert, non-alkaline coating, present in the suspension applied in step (ii) is hydroxypropylmethylcellulose (HPMC).
- 18. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 13, wherein, said inert, non-alkaline polymer soluble in water, comprised in the system of modified release, present in the suspension applied in step (ii) is hydroxypropylmethylcellulose (HPMC).
- 19. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 13 wherein said inert polymer insoluble in water, comprised in the system of modified release, present in the suspension applied in step (ii) is ethylcellulose or a copolymer of ammonium methacrylate.

- 20. (Previously Presented) A composition of modified release that comprises one or more pellets of claim 25.
- 21. (Previously Presented) A composition of modified release comprising a mixture of the pellets of claim 25 having the same release profile.
- 22. (Previously Presented) A composition of modified release comprising a mixture of the pellets of claim 25 having a different release profile.
- 23. (Previously Presented) A composition of modified release comprising a mixture of the pellets of claim 25 which have (i) a quick release profile and (ii) a slow release profile in a ratio between 10:90 and 90:10 by weight.
- 24. (Previously Presented) A composition according to claim 20, in the form of a capsule or a tablet.
- 25. (Previously Presented) A pellet comprising an acid labile benzimidazole compound, wherein the pellet comprises:
 - (a) an inert nucleus;
 - (b) a layer disposed over said inert nucleus (a), consisting of an acid labile-benzimidazole compound, an inert, non-alkaline polymer soluble in water and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable inert excipients;
 - (c) one or more intermediate layers that comprise:
 - (i) an inert, non-alkaline coating, formed of an inert, non-alkaline polymer soluble in water and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable inert excipients; and
 - (ii) a system of modified release that comprises an inert, nonalkaline polymer soluble in water and an inert polymer insoluble in water; said intermediate layer(s) (c) disposed over said layer (b) that covers the inert nucleus; and
 - (d) an external layer comprising an enteric coating disposed over

said intermediate layer(s) (c).